

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES

April 22, 2009

The meeting was called to order by Damian Gregory at 1:45 pm. Introductions were done. The agenda for April was approved. Minutes for March 2009 were accepted with a few minor corrections.

Attendance: Ronald Fulton, Dr. Sam Kohlenberg, Damian Gregory, Jose Martinez, John Miller, Jose Granda, Jackson David, Alan Rigerman, Denise Valkema

Mr. Gregory announced that he was moving the agenda items around because Parks had invited CODI to a demonstration of the Mobi-mat. The demonstration will be held on the west side of the Stephen P. Clark building at 3:30 pm.

New Business: Ms. Ruby Hemingway-Adams was introduced. She is the Assistant Director of Customer Service for Miami-Dade Transit. She is also the Project Director for the new fare system. Last June, the County Commission approved a new fare collection system to replace the antiquated system that Transit has used for the past 20 years. As of now, 800 plus buses have received the new fare box and the new fare gates are being installed at the Metrorail stations. Transit riders will now use "easy" cards to access this new system. These cards must be tapped in order to open the gate. They will be used as a debit card. Ticket vending machines will be in visual and audio format. In the new RFP for Para-transit, the contract will call for vehicles to have GPS systems. This will make the system more efficient and will give information on No Shows and on "Real Time". There was much discussion on the idea that a person would have to tap the card. Mr. Gregory said that CODI had clearly requested not to have that type of access since it would be difficult for a person with hand limitations. He also said that he felt frustrated because he wondered if CODI's recommendations were considered when this system was selected. Ms. Hemingway-Adams said that she would be back next month with a Transit Engineer. She would bring the public input information to show CODI that their comments were considered and the Engineer would address why this system was implemented. There was discussion on the security guards at the stations. She said that Transit would expect the security guards to help anyone that couldn't tap the card. Transit has a new company for security and Ms. Hemingway-Adams encouraged anyone who experiences difficulty with a guard not helping at the gate should call her office. She will recommend sensitivity training for the security guards. Jose Granda reported that when he was in Atlanta he had trouble figuring out the ticket machine. Ms. Hemingway-Adams did say that Transit expected to have staff at all stations to help with the initial rollout. If a registered card is lost or stolen, a person may freeze the card from unauthorized use by calling 311 and then another card with the remaining balance will be issued. Cards will be \$2.00 but initially Transit will be given out free cards. One may put cash on the card by web, phone or in person. Martha Cox also spoke; she is the Acting Manager of Para-transit Operations. She said that Para-transit would like to get away from the voucher system but they are still working on what to do with people who can't be responsible for their own card. By May 1, a letter will go out to all the STS riders who also use fix route (approximately 1500 people). Transit will ask them to come in and have a picture taken for their new card. However if Transit has a picture on file, then Transit will use that picture. Riders may come down to the Over-town Building Monday through Friday from 8:30 till 3:30 to have their picture taken and get a new card. The STS riders who use fixed routes will continue to ride free. Eventually all STS riders will have the easy card. For STS only riders, they will not get their Easy Card until 2010. Under STS standards, Transit may recertify every three years; Miami -Dade Transit has not done that but now, with the introduction of this new system, they will begin to bring people in for recertification.

Mr. Gregory reported that Transit would like Para transit schedules to parallel fixed route schedules. If a bus route isn't running on Sunday, and your house is within that corridor then Para-Transit would not pick you up on Sunday. Obviously, there was concern at this and Mr. Gregory said that the right forum for objections to that policy would be at the County Commission meetings. There is a ten day period after the Public Hearing on the new RFP to give the County your opinion on all issues concerning the RFP..

Access-Transportation Committee: Denise Valkema reported that on April 21, 2009 her committee met with Martha Cox to discuss the revisions to the Riders Guide. Most of the committee's recommendations were accepted by Transit. There is a tentative date for the RFP Public Hearing on May 11, 2009. Ms. Valkema went on to say that a few more corrections were done: time spent in a car was changed from 2 times to equivalent fixed route time- and the Riders Guide will read door to door rather than curb to curb rather. She said that there will be committee minutes available by Friday, April 24, 2009 for those who are interested.

Housing Committee: Mr. Gregory reported that there was a Housing meeting. At the meeting there was discussion to have a face to face meeting where consumers may express their opinion about the accessible and affordable housing market. Also discussed was the research Mr. Howe from the Office of ADA Coordination is doing concerning housing funds available for people with disabilities.

Chairperson's Report: Mr. Gregory reported that he attended the April 7, 2009 meeting where the RFP was discussed. He attended the CTAC meeting where there was a discussion on how fixed route cuts will affect people who use Para-transit. He attended the Airport Access meeting and asked the airport to address the lack of signage for accessible parking at the parking garages. He also said that he has been waiting 6 months for a time frame concerning the restrooms on Concourse F. He also attended a Board of County Commission Health committee and spoke in favor of an Autism Awareness Month designation for April. He reported that Autism is very prevalent and is seen in 1 out of every 150 births. He attended a focus group for the Access Guide at the Center for Independent Living. Mr. Miller and Mr. Gregory attended the two committee meetings on April 17, 2009 at the Office of ADA Coordination concerning the Employment Initiative and the Single Family Rehab Mod program.

CODI secretary left the meeting at 3:30 to see the Mobi-mat demonstration.

Mr. Alan Rigerman has suggested that CODI needs to take in consideration the Disabled Parking issues. Mr. Gregory has promises to add the issues as new business for the next meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm